

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

May 27, 1969

*Rec'd 5/29
JWD*

MEMORANDUM FOR: DR. KISSINGER

The President asked that you note the attached article by Roscoe Drummond.

A
ALEXANDER P. BUTTERFIELD

Attachment

Humphrey Spoils a Hanoi Hope

His Support in Peace Approach Stand
Strengthens Nixon

By Roscoe Drummond

MINNEAPOLIS—Hubert Humphrey, who almost got that task himself, is acting to strengthen the hand of President Nixon in the Vietnam peace negotiations. Humphrey is serving notice on Hanoi that there is no use waiting for a better settlement than Mr. Nixon is offering.

HELPING TO BUILD A COMMON FRONT

He is assuring the President that he is prepared to do anything in his power as leader of the Democratic party to help build a common front at home which will enable the United States to negotiate more effectively in Paris. While Humphrey has major disagreements with Nixon on domestic issues, he has no major disagreements with the President on Vietnam today.

This is one of the most significant political developments since Nixon took office. It means that the President and Humphrey are firm allies in working out the most crucial problem the nation faces—getting peace in Vietnam. Despite past differences between them, evident in the late stages of the campaign when the vice president veered toward dovish Democratic critics, today Humphrey and Nixon are as one on every essential aspect on the Vietnam negotiations.

This Humphrey-Nixon alliance on Vietnam emerged clearly in conversations we had with the former vice president at Macalester College and at the University of Minnesota where he is lecturing.

Few things could do more to promote productive peace talks than a Humphrey-Nixon common front. It will make it far less likely that Hanoi can exploit disunity within the United States as a means of extracting one-sided concessions at the conference table. Unquestionably there will continue to be peace-at-nearly-any-price forces in the United States, but they will be less potent and almost certainly can be contained with Nixon and Humphrey standing together.

There seems no doubt that they are going to be standing together and working together to the extent the President wishes to call on his opponent of last fall. There were no reservations in Humphrey's willingness to help on Vietnam within the terms for negotiating which Nixon is now setting out.

He is convinced that the President is dedicated to ending the war as soon as possible. He be-

lieves the country has reason to trust Nixon to do so. He feels that President Nixon did right in going before the American people and asking them to give him the time and support needed to move the talks ahead.

Humphrey is giving him that support. What impresses us, even beyond the foregoing, is the extent to which Nixon and Humphrey have come to similar conclusions on the whole range of Vietnam questions which are at the core of getting an agreement. It may be that, as President, Nixon has become somewhat more flexible and that

Humphrey, now that the campaign is over, is freer from the pressures to accommodate himself to the conflicting views within his own party.

IN AGREEMENT ON ESSENTIALS.

Whatever the reason, today they are agreed on the essentials of a settlement which the President said we "could live with and be proud of." This means they are united against two things which both believe imprudent: (1) hasty, substantial unilateral withdrawal and (2) imposing an unelected coalition government on the elected government of South Vietnam.

They're also agreed on the essential ingredients of a workable settlement: (1) staged reciprocal withdrawal of U.S. and North Vietnamese forces by formal or informal arrangements and (2) free elections which guarantee that the people of South Vietnam will have a government of their own choosing.

Settlement won't be easy but, working together Nixon and Humphrey may speed the day.

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